

Appln No. 10/672,156

Amdt date November 17, 2004


Reply to Office action of August 17, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action independent claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC 102 as anticipated in view of Abidin et al patent 5,662,669. Claim 1 has been amended to state that the slot (30) extends all the way through the width of the knife body and the connecting portion (34) extends all the way through the slot. Abidin discloses a U-shaped guard 11 that is surrounded by a scalpel 10 to protect a blade 12 (FIG. 6). Guard 11 has in-turned flanges 17 and 18. Alidin does not show or suggest a slot that extends all the way through the width of a knife body and a connecting portion (34) that extends all the way through the slot. According claim 1 and claims 2 to 18, which depend thereon, distinguish patentably from Alidin.

In view of the amendments made at this time and the foregoing remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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